

HORNET HERALD



Northern giant hornet stakeholder update

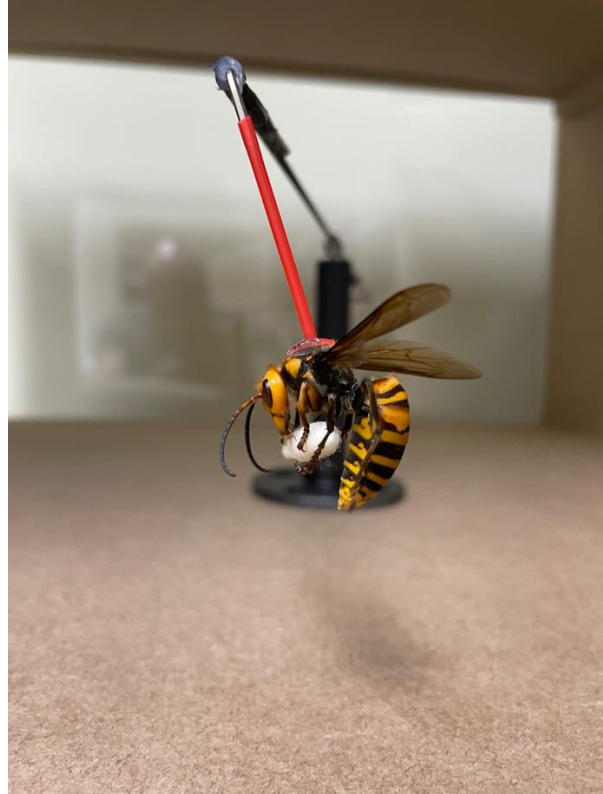


Washington
State Department of
Agriculture

NORTHERN GIANT HORNET STAKEHOLDER UPDATE #23.07 – November 20, 2023

RESEARCH UPDATE

WSDA entomologists recently returned from their second trip to Korea this season, completing a second season of collaborative field research with Kyungpook National University on the northern giant hornet in its native range. The goals of that project are to learn more about hornet foraging behavior (to better deploy the food-based traps we currently use), colony cycles and diurnal behavior patterns, and potential dispersal behavior of newly produced queen hornets. The latter is particularly important for establishing response areas upon detection of hornets in new areas. The season was wracked with challenges, including a typhoon, that impacted some of the data collected. Nevertheless, the team returned with over 200 tethered flight mill trials (a way to estimate the physiological maximum of queen hornet flight ability), 250,000 data points for worker hornets entering and exiting their nests, and over 120 hours of camera footage of activity outside of the hornet nests. They also collected months of data from hornets tagged and moving throughout their foraging areas, although this data is compromised by the hornets literally chewing their tracking tags to pieces. They also tested new, smaller tags that are not yet commercially available – the tags seem to have promise for studying many different insect species. All told, the team assembled a very large data set that will provide unique insights into hornet biology, even given the many setbacks of 2023, which was not a great year for hornets in the local area.



A hornet worker sporting a new, ultra-light solar powered tracking tag (left).
A male hornet pausing for a juice break while attached to a flight mill (right).

CITIZEN SCIENTIST TRAPPING UPDATE

Trapping through November

November 30 will be the last date for the citizen scientist trapping program. Empty your trap to process the last collection before November 30. This means you should not rebait any traps after November 30.

Recycle or keep your bottles for next year

Please recycle your bottles or keep them for next year. We will be reviewing our citizen scientist trapping program over the winter and if you would like to participate next year, the bottle(s) may come in handy.

Watch for survey evaluation

Whether you trapped for a week or several months, we would like to hear about your experience. We will be sending out a survey in December. Your feedback will help shape our public trapping program next year.



WSDA TRAPPING

WSDA has placed around 800 traps in Whatcom County. The program is continuing to monitor and check traps for hornets. They will begin removing traps in December.

WATCH A WASP NEST EVALUATION

The Watch A Wasp Nest Program is over for the year and the [evaluation is available](#)! Beginning in June, residents were asked to monitor paper wasp nests weekly to help look for northern giant hornets. If you participated, please take a few minutes to [respond to the survey](#) even if you only observed a nest for part of the season.

NEW DETECTIONS – REPORT SIGHTINGS

There have been no confirmed detections of northern giant hornets so far in 2023.

It is still important to be on the lookout. Dead or alive, northern giant hornet reports are helpful. In December 2019 and September 2020, dead hornets were collected. One hornet was found on a porch, and the other was inside a lantern-style electric yard light that had a paper wasp nest inside.



Any confirmed report can help guide trapping efforts, and collected hornets can aid in future research. If you think you have seen a hornet, [report it online](#), email us at hornets@agr.wa.gov, or call 1-800-443-6684. Include a photo if you can safely obtain one. If the specimen is dead, you may collect it and wait for our response.

YELLOW-LEGGED HORNETS

Update from Georgia

The Georgia Department of Agriculture announced the discovery and eradication of three additional yellow-legged hornet nests near Savannah, GA. They are continuing their efforts to eradicate the yellow-legged hornet from Georgia. [Read the full press release.](#)



UPDATE FROM CANADA

British Columbia continues to do surveillance with traps and urge beekeepers to do the same. They are wrapping up their season. This year they have had no northern giant hornet detections.

STAY CONNECTED

WSDA is dedicated to working with the public and providing information about northern giant hornets.

- View [past news releases, blogs, and Pest Program updates](#) about northern giant hornet.

- Join the [northern giant hornet Facebook group](#).
- Join the [Pest Program email listserv](#).
- Follow WSDA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [Twitter](#).

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